

### Response

Claims 14 and 15 have been rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 7 and 14 are amended to overcome claim this rejection.

Reconsideration of this rejection is requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4-8 and 10-13 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,405,027 to Bell ("Bell").

Bell concerns a mobile communication handset configured for communicating over a first wireless link to a base station, through which it may access the PSTN or any external network and with one or more other communication devices over respective wireless links which are direct device-to-device links, in this case implemented with the Bluetooth Intercom Profile. The mobile communication handset comprises means for carrying a group call between the various devices.

In Bell, the pairs of modules of different elaborateness are not subject to a double upward and downward hierarchy. Indeed, the handset  $D_0$  of Bell is configured to handle a group call between a telephone of the PSTN and a series of handsets  $D_2, \dots, D_n$  to which it is linked by direct device-to-device links. It handles the group call by combining, in its group call combining means, the speech signal carried by the different links and the handset.

The whole process, from the establishment of the group call to its achievement, is handled and mastered by the handset  $D_0$  :

-“the user of device  $D_0$  then selects “Bluetooth call” from the list at block 52 and causes a Bluetooth connection request to be issued to device  $D_2$  at block 54” (col. 5, lines 7-10);

-“the connection is completed by device  $D_0$ ” (col. 5, line 13);

-“device  $D_0$  provides any necessary control signaling to maintain the Bluetooth intercom call”;

-“the device  $D_0$  [...] maintains the group call among devices  $D_0$  through  $D_3$  by appropriately combining and distributing audio signals in accordance with the relationships aforementioned” (col. 5, lines 24-28).

As a consequence, it is clear that device  $D_0$  actuates as a master for the other handsets, and never as a slave of them. Hence, claim 1 of this application is not anticipated by Bell.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

An amended claim 7, has been amended so as to precise its dependency with claim 1. This dependency was implicit in the reading of the claims, so much as the examiner has considered claim 7 dependent of claim 1 in the action.

An amended claim 14 is filed, in response to the claim rejection based on 35 U.S.C. §112.

It is believed that the §112 formal objections have been overcome.

New claims 19-24 have been added. They correspond to claims 16-18, filed two more times, but referring to claim 12 for claims 19-21 and to claim 14 for claims 22-24.

Because of their dependency with claim 1, claims 2-24 (with amended claims 7 and 14, and new claims 19-24) are not anticipated by Bell, nor by Bell in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,289,218, U.S. Patent No. 6,493,550 or U.S. Patent No. 6,275,500.

It is believed that all of the present claims are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable action by the Examiner is earnestly solicited.

#### **AUTHORIZATION**

If the Examiner believes that issues may be resolved by telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned at (212) 801-2146. The undersigned may also be contacted by e-mail at [ecr@gtlaw.com](mailto:ecr@gtlaw.com).

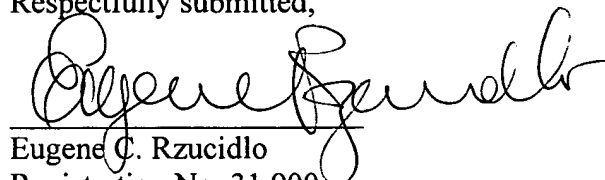
No additional fee is believed to be necessary. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for this amendment, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1561.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No. 50-1561.

Dated: March 8, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

By:



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